

St. Paul Lutheran Church

9:30a Service of Worship
Pastor ~ Reverend Ashley Nicolls

First Sunday of Advent | December 1, 2024

May God's grace continue to overflow to and through you.



Assisting In Worship

Assisting Minister
Farleen Ashbrook

Reader

Farleen Ashbrook

Acolyte

Ryan Masse

Sound

John Beyer Mike Scherr

Camera Operator Ron Zimmerman

Screen Operator

Sue Scherr Ushers

Judy Roberts & Kathie Snyder

Greeter

Hank Roberts

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church!

We hope you will use this bulletin during the week to have a song to sing, prayers to pray and give comfort, whether you are worshipping in person or from home on your electronic devices.

Although not all of us are physically together to worship, our Lord is still with us. We give thanks for those who attend in-person and the technology that allows us to share the bulletin and the worship service on the website.

St. Paul has a Community Prayer Cross located outside near the road. You are welcome to leave a prayer request there or in the box when you enter, and it will be placed on the cross.

Important community ministries of St. Paul include the Tuesday Community Meal, Saturday Food Pantry, and the Early Childhood Learning Center. Your financial gift makes a difference for Christ and His kingdom and enables St. Paul to be *the community church that cares*. It can be made by online giving, on Sunday morning, mailed to the church, or dropped off during normal office hours - Monday-Friday • 9a-12noon.

May God bless you and give you peace!

Welcome and Announcements Prelude

"Caroling, Caroling" - Alfred Burt/arr. by: D. Bish - Fonda Davies

Litany for Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Pastor: We praise you, O God, as you come near to us.

Response: You hold us in our waiting, you keep us awake to the world. You show up in our lives unexpectedly.

Pastor: Bless us as we light this candle to keep vigil for your arrival.

Response: We trust that, though we don't know the day or the hour, you are hurrying to gather all people to your peace. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Song — Light a Candle: An Advent Wreath-Lighting Song





Confession and Forgiveness

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, \oplus one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

Response: Amen.

Pastor: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Pastor: God of mercy,

Response: we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

Pastor: God of might,

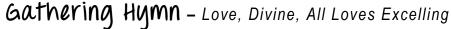
Response: we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

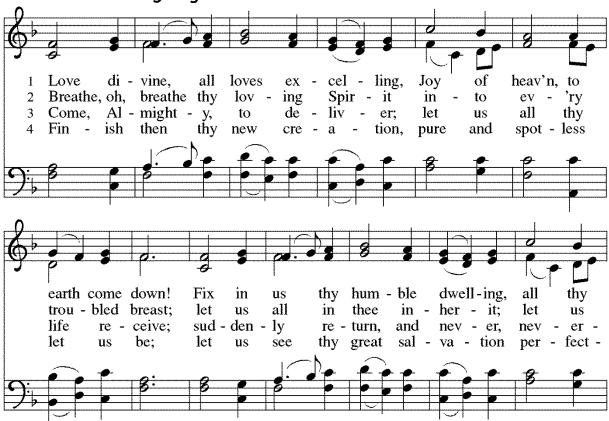
Pastor: God in our midst,

Response: we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

Pastor: A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through 🕂 Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

Response: Amen.







Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788 Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811–1887

Prayer of the Day

Pastor: Let us pray,

Response: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. You O God, work through grace-filled beginnings. Open our eyes to your truth and lead us to your grace. In all things, help us to know that your grace is for us, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Ministry in Music

"Come, Emmanuel"- Besig/Price - St. Paul Singers

Children's Message

Scripture ~ Jeremiah 33:14-16

In the Old Testament, "righteousness" often has to do with being faithful in relationship. God acts righteously both in punishing Israel for its sin and in having mercy. In today's reading, Jerusalem's future name—"The Lord is our righteousness"—proclaims that God is even now working salvation for Israel.

¹⁴ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵ In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

Word of God. Word of Life. Response: Thanks be to God.

Scripture ~ Psalm 25:1-10

- ¹ To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
- ² My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.
- ³ Let none who look to you be put to shame; rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.
- ⁴ Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.

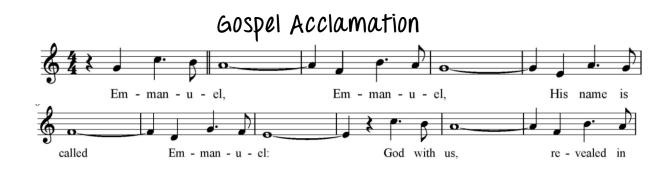
- ⁵ Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.
- ⁶ Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.
- ⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.
- ⁸ You are gracious and upright, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.
- ⁹ You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.
- ¹⁰ All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.

Scripture ~ 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Upon Timothy's report from the congregation at Thessalonica, Paul is exuberant with gratitude for them. In this passage from his letter, Paul voices overflowing thanks, joy, and blessings for the people of this growing church.

- ⁹ How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.
- ¹¹ Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹² And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³ And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Word of God. Word of Life. Response: Thanks be to God.





GOSPel ~ Luke 21:25-36

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God will fulfill God's purposes and, already, hidden signs of that fulfillment abound. On that great day there will be dismay, perplexity, confusion, and terror, but God's people shall be given strength to stand boldly and receive God's promised redemption.

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 21st chapter.

Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ²⁵ "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

²⁹ Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴ "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord. Response: Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon ~ Pastor Ashley Nicolls

Hymn of the Day - In a Far-Off Place, Jesus Comes



Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953

Music: TENTH NIGHT, Sally Ann Morris, b. 1952

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Prayers of the Church

Assisting Minister: God's grace is about new beginnings. As we journey to the manger, let us pray that all creation will know that God's grace is for us. *(pause for silence)*

Assisting Minister: God of Grace, all creation lives in hopeful expectation of your coming.

Response: Let all people know that your grace is for us, and open our hearts to see the world as you see it.

Assisting Minister: In the mercy of the manger, *Response:* receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, we are witnesses to your creation and all the joy it can bring.

Response: We understand that while there is precious rain, there is also destroying rain. Where there is a gentle breeze, there is also destructive wind. Guide us to care for all creation, taking part in nurturing our world back to wholeness.

Assisting Minister: In the mercy of the manger, *Response*: receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, you are the ruler of the kingdom in heaven and on earth. Response: May your Spirit guide all who hold authority over others, lead in ways that promote peace and justice.

Assisting Minister: In the mercy of the manger, *Response:* receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, you bring us to grace-filled beginnings.

Response: Be with all who face challenging times during this season of joy. Guide us to bring comfort to those who need to see the light in their darkness.

Assisting Minister: Be especially with those we name now aloud or in our hearts. (pause)

Assisting Minister: In the mercy of the manger, *Response:* receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, you draw us into community.

Response: May the ministries of this congregation love and serve our neighbor. Remind us to be the neighbor that we need in our times of darkness, so that your light may be the beacon that draws us together.

Assisting Minister: In the mercy of the manger, *Response*: receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God of grace, faith in the promises you make through your son, Jesus Christ, have been handed down through the ages.

Response: We give thanks for all who have nurtured and sustained faith during their lives, and praise you for the joy that is theirs in everlasting life.

Assisting Minister: In the mercy of the manger, *Response*: receive our prayer.

Assisting Minister: God, whose Spirit tells us that your grace is for us, prepare our hearts for the coming of your love made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. *Response:* Amen.

The Peace

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always. *Response:* And also with you.

offering

(The collection plates will be brought forward at this time. Offering plates can still be found at the back of the sanctuary if you did not place your offering in the plates when you entered. Online giving at www.stpaulsarasota.org is also available.)

Offering Prayer

Assisting Minister: Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Response: Amen.

Spiritual Communion Prayer

Pastor: My Jesus, I believe that You are present in this most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Holy Communion

(Those who want to partake of Christ's body and blood in their in their seats may lift up their elements at this time).

Pastor: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and

for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. *Response:* Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Lord's Prayer

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your love and teach us to pray.

Response: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor: God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: Those who wish to remain at their seats to partake of Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine/grape juice may do so now. The body and blood of Christ is given and shed for you. Take and eat. Take and drink. If you wish to come to the altar, you may do so at the ushers' direction.

Post Communion Blessing

Pastor: Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace now and forever. **Response:** Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Assisting Minister: God, we give you thanks for this meal of Grace, where you pull us together to receive the bountiful blessings of your love. In mercy, strengthen us through this gift of faith as we look to the one, we find in the manger, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Response: Amen.

Blessing

Pastor: God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ⊕ bless and keep you now and forever. *Response:* Amen



Text: John Brownlie, 1859-1925

Music: CONSOLATION, A. Davisson, Kentucky Harmony, 1816; arr. Theodore A. Beck, 1929-2003

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Dismissal

Pastor: Journey to the manger.

Response: Where God's grace is found.

Children: And all God's children say,

Response: Amen.

Postlude

"Toccata on 'Veni Emmanuel'" - Page C. Long - Fonda Davies

Coffee 4 Social Hour is held in the Fellowship Hall after worship.

Flowers are given this week by: Pastor Don and Marty Hillerich in thanksgiving for all the amazing St. Paul volunteers.

Eternal Candle is given this month by: Rick and Sue Barry in thanksgiving for our many blessings.

Attendance for last Sunday: 58 in-person; 457 views on line. (11/25/24)

Announcements

Mid-Week Advent Soup Supper and Worship Wednesdays, December 4, 11, and 18. 6p Soup, 7p worship.

Adopt-a-Road Saturday December 7 at 8am. Meet at the fountain to help clean up Bahia Vista Street from 41 to Tuttle.

A Visit with Santa December 7 in the Fellowship Hall 1-3p.

Special Congregational Meeting to Approval 2025 Spending Plan, Elect Council, and Elect Nominating Team Members, and see constitutional changes. Sunday December 8 right after worship.

Christmas Eve worship December 24 at 7p.

St. Paul Mission Statement

As a Holy Spirit-led family of God, we are called through baptism to proclaim and bear witness to God's reconciling grace in Jesus Christ to all so that by joyfully sharing God's Word and encouraging each other to service for the sake of others, our lives together make a difference for Christ and His kingdom.

Please remember in your prayers...

All those serving in the U.S. Military. The homeless in our neighborhood, our city, our nation and the world. The Florida Bahamas Synod Office of the Bishop Staff: Bishop Pedro, Assisting Ministers to the Bishop Pastors Carlos, Derek, Nicole, and Rob, Specialists Kim, Bill, & Brittney, Support Staff Tina, Yuliet, & Ileana. The Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church. SURE – Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity. Community Meal and Food Pantry guests. Prayers upon the HOPE Community Prayer Cross. The Arlington Park Neighborhood.

St. Paul members, especially, Lindy Lindemann, June Manselle and Sharon Mashanic.

St. Paul Early Childhood Learning Center teachers and students, especially, Anna, Finley, Adaline, Ms. Lisa and Ms. Iven

Members

Beetle/O'Hara Family Dorothy Boller Susan Burmaster

Sue Fisher JoAnn Jordan

Brian McCulley

James Paulsson

Betty Smowton Kathie Snyder

Homebound Members

Donna Casala Evelyn Gulliksen Lindy Lindemann June Manselle Anna Mathisen Virginia McQuaig John Miller

Michael Reiter Carole Wilson

Friends and Family

Alice – friend of JoAnn Jordan
Bill – friend of Jan Kruse
Brad – brother of Cindy Paxton
Cassandra – friend of Irene Felicetti
Debbie – friend of Scherrs
Ed – friend of Sandy Choquette
Gina – friend of Jan Kruse
Greg – friend of Jan Kruse

Marilyn – aunt of S. Weckwerth

Mark – friend of M & D Hillerich Patty – sister of C. Paxton

Susan – friend of C. Paxton Tunde – friend of Irene Felicetti

Sandi Acevedo – sister-in-law of Acevedo

Clinton Allen – *friend of Jim Paulsson* Laura Anderson – *niece of Roberts* Lori Boller – daughter-in-law of Dorothy Boller

Sheryl Brandes – sister-in-law of Sue

Buete and Pearson family- family of

Brian McCulley
Caroline Burmaster – sister-in-law of

Susan Burmaster – sister-iri-iaw or

Todd Couch – son of Sandy

Choquette

Mike Cunningham- friend of H.

Roberts

Bill Davies – regular attender John and Joy Emanuelli – friends of

Roberts

Gladys Faraone – friend of H. Roberts

John Foor – friends of Ryans Susan Gallagher – daughter of

Dorothy Boller

Gallagher Family – in-laws of Dorothy

Boller

Vickie Hall – sister of Fonda Davies Lois Heisler – family of Irene Felicetti Niklaus Heisler – great-grandson of

Irene Felicetti

Katy Hernandev – *niece of M. Acevedo*

Kara Johnson – friend of Amy Hildreth

Nicole Ketler – friend of Susan

Burmaster

Philip Koepke – friend of Irene Felicetti Kate Kretschmann- family of Lindy

Lindemann

Karen Kugler – *friend of Marty Hillerich* Kenny Manselle—*son of June*

Manselle

David McCall - brother of J. Roberts

Kevin McKenny – friend of Susan Burmaster

Marsha McKinney- former member Becky Nobles – friend of Lindy

Lindemann

Linda and Jim Norris – family of

Doris Schlotterback

 ${\sf Karen\ Paulsson}-{\it sister\ of\ J.\ Paulsson}$

Manny Ribas – friend of Cindy

Schlotterback

Clint Shantz – former member

Brian, Kenny, & Tommy

Schlotterback—sons of Doris

Schlotterback

Haley Schlotterback – granddaughterin-law of Doris Schlotterback.

Bethany Smith - daughter of B&B

Smith

Noel Scott Studenwalt - nephew of

B&B Smith

Bill Sweeney – grandson of Marilyn and George Hutfilz

and George Huttilz

Bill & Jean Thompson – sister and

brother-in-law of Dorothy Boller Dan Torrence – friend of K. Snyder

David Van Ness – brother of Missy Craia

Elaine & Mark Vanderweight- friends of Jim Paulsson

Curtis Weckwerth – cousin of Rich

Weckwerth

John and Janet Welther – family of Ethel Hamilton

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St. Paul Lutheran Church

and Early Childhood Learning Center

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Florida-Bahamas Synod, established 1955 2256 Bahia Vista Street, Sarasota, Florida 34239 Phone: 941.955.6479 Fax: 941.955.8600 ECLC Phone: 941.955.6480 Website: www.StPaulSarasota.org

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Lisa McLean, ECLC Director--StPaul-eclc@verizon.net
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The Rev. Don Hillerich, D.D. - Pastor Emeritus – djhillerich@yahoo.com

Executive Committee
Irene Felicetti, President JoAnn Jordan, Vice President
George Hutfilz, Treasurer Don Hillerich, Secretary

Congregation Council

Irene Felicetti
Lori Fountain-
Guillaume
Carol Grosch
Amy Hildreth

Marthe Hildreth Pr. Don Hillerich JoAnn Jordan Bob Lariviere

Pr. Ashley Nicolls Nancy Parmakian Judy Roberts Alexandra Wise





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